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PATENT APPLICATION

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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Device for temperature measurement

The invention relates to a device for temperature measurement.

Such devices which are known in the art for contactless temperature

5 measurement comprise a detector for receiving heat radiation emanating from a measurement spot on an object of measurement, an optical system for imaging the heat radiation emanating from the measurement spot onto the detector and a sighting arrangement for identifying the position and size of the measurement spot on the object of measurement by means of visible light. A further processing arrangement which converts the detector signal into a temperature indication is also connected to the detector.

10 In this case the optical system is so designed that at a certain measurement distance for the most part only heat radiation from a certain area of the object of measurement, namely the so-called measurement spot, is focussed onto the detector. In most cases the size of the measurement spot is defined by the area from which 90% of the heat rays 15 focussed onto the detector strike. However, applications are also known in which there are reference to values between 50% and 100%.

15 The pattern of the dependence of the size of the measurement spot upon the measurement distance depends upon the design of the optical system. A fundamental distinction is made between distant focussing and close focussing. In distant focussing the optical system images the detector into infinity and in close focussing it images it onto the focus plane. In the case of distant focussing it is necessary to deal with a measurement spot which grows linearly with the measurement distance, whereas in close focussing the measurement spot will first of all become smaller with the measurement distance and after the focus plane will enlarge again if the free aperture of the optical system is greater than the 20 measurement spot in the focus plane. If the measurement spot in the focus plane is greater than the free aperture of the optical system, then the measurement spot is also enlarged with the measurement distance even before the focus plane. Only the increase in the size of the measurement spot is smaller before the focus plane than after it.

25 In the past various attempts were made to render the position and size of the measurement spot, which is invisible *per se*, visible by illumination. According to JP-A-47-22521 a plurality of rays which originate from several light sources or are obtained by reflection from a light source are directed along the marginal rays of a close-focussed

optical system onto the object of measurement. In this way the size and position of the measurement spot for a close-focussed system can be rendered visible by an annular arrangement of illuminated points around the measurement spot. US-A-5,368,392 describes various methods of outlining measurement spots by laser beams. These include the

5 mechanical deflection of one or several laser beams as well as the splitting of a laser beam by a beam divider or a fibre optic system into several single beams which surround the measurement spot.

A sighting system is also known in the art which uses two laser beams to describe the size of the measurement spot. This system uses two divergent beams emanating 10 from the edge of the optical system to characterise a close-focussed system and two laser beams which intersect in the focus point to characterise a close-focussed optical system.

All known sighting arrangements are either only useful for a certain measurement distance or require relatively complex adjustment and are often quite expensive.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The object of the invention, therefore, is to make further developments to the device for temperature measurement in such a way as to facilitate simple identification of the position and size of the measurement spot independently of the distance.

This object is achieved according to one aspect of the invention, in that the sighting arrangement has a diffractive optical system for producing a light intensity 20 distribution with which the position and size of the measurement spot on the object of measurement can be rendered visible.

According to another aspect of the invention, a diffractive optical system is an optical element, the function of which is based principally upon the diffraction of light waves. In order to produce the diffraction, transverse microstructures which can consist, for example, 25 of a surface profile or a refractive index profile are provided in the optical element.

Diffractive optical elements with a surface profile are also known as so-called holographic elements. The surface patterns are produced for example by exposure of photoresist layers to light and subsequent etching. Such a surface profile can also be converted by electroplating into an embossing printing block with which the hologram profile can be transferred into 30 heated plastic films and reproduced. Thus many holographic elements can be produced economically from one hologram printing block.

The pattern of the diffractive optical system is produced by interference of an object wave with a reference wave. If for example a spherical wave is used as the object wave and a plane wave as the reference wave then an intensity distribution is produced in the

image plane which is composed of a point in the centre (0th order), a first intensive circle (first order) and further less intensive circle of greater diameter (higher orders). By screening out of the 0th and the higher orders an individual circle can be filtered out. A plurality of other intensity distributions which are explained in greater detail below with reference to

5 several embodiments can be produced by other object waves.

According to another aspect of the invention, usually approximately 80% of the energy emanating from the light source lies in the patterns produced by the diffractive optical system. The remaining energy is distributed inside and outside the measurement spot.

According to a further aspect of the invention, the light intensity distribution
10 which is produced can be formed, for example, by a circular marking surrounding the measurement spot or a cross-shaped marking.

Such a device can also be produced economically and only requires a little adjustment work.

Further constructions of the invention are the subject of the subordinate claims
15 and are explained in greater detail below with reference to the description of several embodiments and to the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 shows a schematic representation of a device according to the invention for temperature measurement according to a first embodiment;

20 Figures 2a to 2g show schematic representations of various light intensity distributions for identifying the position and size of the measurement spot;

Figure 3 shows a schematic representation of a device according to the invention for temperature measurement according to a second embodiment;

25 Figure 4 shows a schematic representation of a device according to the invention for temperature measurement according to a third embodiment;

Figure 5 shows a schematic representation of a device according to the invention for temperature measurement according to a fourth embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Figure 1 shows a first embodiment of a device according to the invention for
30 temperature measurement, comprising

(a) a detector 1 for receiving heat radiation 3 emanating from a measurement spot 2a of an object of measurement 2,

(b) an optical system 4 for imaging the heat radiation emanating from the measurement spot 2a onto the detector 1,

c) and a sighting arrangement 5 for identifying the position and size of the measurement spot 2a on the object of measurement 2 by means of visible light 6.

The sighting arrangement 5 consists essentially of a light source 5a, a diffractive optical system formed for example by a holographic element 5b and an additional refracting and/or reflecting optical element 5c. The light source 5a sends a reference wave 6a onto the holographic element 5b, resulting in a conically opening hologram 6b which is transformed by the optical element 5c so that it forms an intensity distribution 6c which describes the position and size of the measurement spot 2a over all measurement distances.

A laser is advantageously used as the light source 5a for generating the reference wave. However, it is also possible to use a semiconductor light-emitting diode or a thermal light source. When a thermal light source is used a filter is advantageously provided in order to reduce the chromatic aberrations.

The optical system 4 is formed by a dichroic beam divider 4a and an infrared lens 4b. The heat radiation 3 emanating from the measurement spot 2a first of all reaches the beam divider 4a which deflects the heat radiation, i.e., the infrared radiation, by 90° and delivers it to the infrared lens 4b.

Since the beam divider 4a must of necessity lie in the beam path of the sighting arrangement 5 it is constructed as a dichromatic beam divider which is reflective for the heat radiation emanating from the measurement spot 2a and transparent for the visible light of the sighting arrangement 5.

The size of the marking to be produced depends essentially upon two parameters, namely the measurement distance and the desired accuracy of measurement. The accuracy of measurement results from the percentage of the rays emanating from the measurement spot and focussed onto the detector. The area of the measurement spot can for example be defined by the fact that 90% of the emanating radiation reaches the detector. However, depending upon the application this percentage can also be changed.

The optical element 5c which is adapted to the optical system 4 is provided in order to ensure that in each measurement distance the marking produced for identifying the measurement spot has the correct size for the desired accuracy or measurement.

Figures 2a to 2g show light intensity distributions such as might be produced on the object of measurement 2 for identifying the measurement spot 2a. Figures 2a to 2d show annular markings which substantially outline the measurement spot 2a. In this case the markings can be configured as in Figures 2a and 2c as a closed circle 3a or in Figures 2b and

2d as a broken circle 3b. It may also be advantageous to represent the centre of the measurement spot by a further marking 3c, for example in the form of a dot.

In Figures 2e and 2f the light intensity distributions are represented as cross-shaped markings 3d and 3e respectively. In this case the point of intersection represents the 5 centre of the measurement spot 2a and the four corner points represent the outer limits thereof.

A very advantageous light intensity distribution is represented in Figure 2g in the form of a plurality of concentric circles 3f, 3g, 3h. In this case each circle represents a region of the measurement spot 2a from which a certain percentage of the energy of the 10 received heat radiation originates. Thus for example the inner circle 3f could represent the region of the measurement spot from which 90% of the energy striking the detector originates. The second ring 3g represents an energy value of 95% and the third ring 3h would correspond to an energy value of 99%. With the aid of such a light intensity distribution the user can recognise the level of accuracy with which he can measure objects of a certain size.

15 A further device according to the invention for temperature measurement is represented in Figure 3. The same reference numerals are used in this case for the same components. This second embodiment differs from the first one essentially in the design of the optical system 4 and the optical element 5'c of the sighting arrangement 5. In Figure 3 the optical element 5'c is constructed as an annular lens and accordingly is designed to produce a 20 light intensity distribution according to Figures 2a to 2d. The infrared lens 4'b is arranged so that it is surrounded by the annular lens 5'c. The detector 1 is then provided between the holographic element 5b and the infrared lens 4'b.

Such an arrangement has the advantage that a beam divider can be omitted. However, a somewhat more complicated fixing of the detector must be accepted, since the 25 conically opening hologram 6b must not be restricted thereby.

In the third embodiment illustrated in Figure 4 the problem of mounting the detector 1 is circumvented by providing the beam divider 4'a between the holographic element 5b and the arrangement consisting of the annular lens 5c and the infrared lens 4'b. Thus the heat radiation emanating from the measurement spot 2a is focussed first of all by the 30 infrared lens 4'b onto the beam divider 4'a and is there deflected by 90° onto the detector 1.

Whereas all the previously described embodiments related to distant-focussed systems, an embodiment is shown in Figure 5 in which the shape of the measurement spot of a close-focussed system can be rendered visible with the aid of a diffractive optical system. In this case the measurement plane, i.e., the object of measurement 2, lies directly in the

focus plane of the optical system 4. In each case two rays 3i, 3k delimiting the infrared beam are shown in the drawing. The ray 3i extends from the upper edge of the infrared lens 4'b to the upper edge of the measurement spot 2a or from the lower edge of the infrared lens 4'b to the lower edge of the measurement spot. By contrast, the ray 3k extends from the lower edge 5 of the infrared lens 4'b to the upper edge of the measurement spot 2a or from the upper edge of the infrared lens 4'b to the lower edge of the measurement spot.

The optical element 5'c of the sighting arrangement 5 is designed so as to produce two intensity cones 6d and 6e which substantially follow the course of the marginal rays 3k and 3i. In this case the intensity cone 6e describes the size of the measurement spot 10 as far as the focus plane and the intensity cone 6d describes the divergent measurement spot after the focus plane.

A disadvantage of this embodiment is that the intensity cone 6d extends inside the marginal ray 3k, whilst the intensity cone 6e extends outside the marginal ray 3i. However, this disadvantage can be overcome by another design of the refracting and/or 15 reflecting optical element 5'c.

In the embodiment according to Figure 5 the light intensity distribution could advantageously be formed by two circular concentric markings, wherein one circular marking identifies the measurement spot lying between the optical element 5'c and the focus plane and the other marking identifies the measurement spot lying behind the focus plane - when 20 viewed from the optical element.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A device for temperature measurement uses an optical system to image the
5 heat radiation emanating from a measurement spot on an object of measurement onto a
detector. A sighting arrangement is also provided which has a diffractive optical system by
which a light intensity distribution is produced which corresponds to the position and size of
the measurement spot on the object of measurement.

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